

## MENTAL HEALTH LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

March 10, 2008 – MINUTES

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**In attendance:** Council Members: Chairman Jacob Wagner, Louise Brewster, Kathy Berg, Tom Peluso, Jan Bjork, Charlotte Kress, Stephanie Nelson, Shelly Johnson, Shelly Heilweil and Commissioner Bill Murdock ; Advocacy Members: Dennis Cox (AMDD), Dorothy Eck, and Dan Aune (GMHC); Staff: Glenda Howze.

**Call to Order and Introductions** – 12:09 PM. Chairman Wagner opened the meeting and allowed for introductions.

**Public Comment** – Ms. Eck and Ms. Johnson stated that there is good news that Mental Health Parity passed the House. Ms. Eck also noted that there is bad news that we're losing Dan Aune and Tracy Velazquez. Mr. Aune stated that he felt like he had disappointed a lot of people, but he has to do what is best for his family. The job he is taking has more of a national focus and he will be writing proposals, etc. that will help the entire community as well. He has met with WMMHC Director Paul Meyer and has re-written his job description and posting. He has recommended an interim manager but doesn't think that will happen. WMMHC has determined that they will retain Mr. Aune to see pending projects through to completion such as the campus. Mr. Peluso noted that Mr. Aune and the MHC were awarded the drop-in center grant (Item 1 on the Priority Table). Mr. Aune explained that they have leased space on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Medical Arts Building and are in the process of interviewing consumers who will run the center. It requires 80 hours of training for the consumers that will take on this job. They hope to open the center by April 2<sup>nd</sup> and its hours of operation will be M-F 2PM-9PM and Saturdays will have some mid-day hours. Mr. Aune has also put out a proposal for \$280,000 for a job service for their consumer base and transitional housing assistance for Gallatin and Park Counties. There is also a proposal to the Veteran's Affairs for a Center of Excellence for Treating of Trauma for those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. Ms. Eck stated that the Legislative Interim Committee discussing youth who are mentally ill. There is strong support in this committee for a mental health court system. Mr. Peluso stated that the court in Missoula is primarily for adults. Chairman Wagner stated that Channel 63 has the Interim Committee on Criminal Justice sessions. During a recent session they discussed having an "alternative court" rather than having a Treatment Court and a Mental Health Court.

**Approval of Minutes (February 11, 2008)** – Corrections were noted to the minutes. Mr. Peluso made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

**"Mental Health for Everyone" Planning Discussion** – This was an item requested by Ms. Lori Marchak. In her absence this item was pulled for a future meeting.

**Priority Table Updates** – 'Dan' and 'Tracy' will need to be removed from the "Who" column for various items they were working on. We also need someone to replace Tracy on the subcommittee for the priority table work. Vicki DeBoer is also transitioning out of the KMA but will continue to work with the LAC. (2) Discussion took place regarding Mental Health Courts. Ms. Bjork is an intricate part of this and is part of the team looking into the possibilities of having a court here. Ms. Bjork stated that once the committee has concluded its work it can present the numbers and case for this to the LAC. Commissioner Murdock suggested that this time item be a separate action item from the MH & Criminal Justice item. (3) The County is under the lead of the Sheriff on this item. The Sheriff has embraced the law enforcement training in Memphis and a team is traveling to Memphis to the next training on April 24<sup>th</sup>. They will have class work as well as opportunities to travel with special offers on mental health calls. When they return

they will then be able to further the training of others here in our County. Three staff members from the MHC will be attending as well as Lt. Jeff Wade and Mark Hernandez from the Sheriff's Office. (10) It was suggested that an item be added as number ten that is titled "Legislative Agenda." Mr. Peluso passed out NAMI's proposal to the state for its legislative priorities and offered discussion on them. Ms. Brewster stated that perhaps another priority would be to have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder added to the eligibility list. It is missing the word "debilitating" in the definition to make it eligible. Mr. Peluso made a motion that the LAC adopt these priorities as a working document/instrument until the LAC can develop its own priority list prior to the next legislative session. Ms. Brewster seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried unanimously. Ms. Eck stated that usually the legislative process is started with working with candidates. It may be a good idea to plan to work with other groups that have similar issues or goals. We would all probably receive a better response if we combine our efforts. Chairman Wagner suggested that perhaps a subcommittee should work on the legislative agenda area as time gets closer. Ms. Brewster agreed that this would be a good idea and suggested that someone should organize the effort and make sure that a representative is at each function where legislators are speaking and/or participating in a forum. Ms. Eck stated that it would be wise to have someone attending the Interim Committee meetings as well.

Mr. Peluso stated that the SAA's were originally constituted by the legislature and they have felt obligated to report to the legislature. The funding contract prohibits members of the SAA's from lobbying regarding this matter. Discussion took place regarding the difference between advocacy/education and lobbying. Mr. Peluso stated that he presented at Legislature and was told that he could not testify on anything that was against the Governor's agenda. This needs clarification. Commissioner Murdock stated that the County can help get this clarified so that LAC members can participate in the legislative session in some fashion. Ms. Nelson stated that perhaps the LAC could partner with another organization who has a lobbyist for more efficiency.

(5) Transportation - Chairman Wagner will try to visit with Jay Winchester and Lisa Ballard before the next meeting. Commissioner Murdock stated that the next public transportation meeting is on the 11<sup>th</sup> @ 4PM, City Hall.

**Agency Reports - MHC:** Mr. Aune stated that he will email the work plan for the Drop-In Center. The MHC has a new medical provider starting soon who will be half time in Park County and half time in Gallatin County. **ADSGC:** Ms. Johnson stating that they are continuing to work on co-occurring updates. They are having a change agent meeting in April and there will soon be training of new individuals and interested parties. The co-occurring initiative has been in the state since 1998 trying to get integrated systems of care. They are now opening up the training to others as well. A change agent is someone trained to provide the integrated system of care. The system is changing to a focus on the whole client - to treat the whole person for a better outcome. April 1<sup>st</sup> ADSGC will open their new residential treatment center. It is located in a house at the corner of Church and Olive and is for up to 8 male adults. Treatment will be provided at ADSGC. The home has a very structured, extensive security system. **AMDD:** Mr. Cox reported that the 72-hour program has been up and running for one week now. This program is operating in Butte, Bozeman, Helena, Missoula, Billings, Miles City, and Hamilton. Hopefully these areas will begin to see a decrease in emergency stays at MSH. Mr. Cox encouraged the LAC members to review the rules and make comments on them if they have any - the rules are open for comment until the end of April.

**Agenda for April Meeting - (Continue) Mental Health for Everyone Planning Discussion**

**Meeting adjourned at 1:08 PM**